

Appln. No.: 09/927,963
Amdt. Dated February 27, 2007
Reply to Office Action dated November 27, 2006

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Amended) A method for tracking through a carrier distribution system a mail item created by a sender, the method comprising the steps of:
 - inducting the mail item into the carrier distribution system, the mail item having thereon a unique sender generated identifier;
 - obtaining the unique sender generated identifier from the mail item during processing of the mail item in the carrier distribution system;
 - assigning a unique carrier generated identifier to the mail item during processing of the mail item in the carrier distribution system;
 - associating the unique sender generated identifier with the unique carrier generated identifier during processing of the mail item in the carrier distribution system;
 - the carrier tracking the location of the mail item through the carrier distribution system using the unique carrier generated identifier; and
 - allowing the sender to obtain location information about the mail item using the unique sender generated identifier without the sender having knowledge of the unique carrier generated identifier by receiving at the carrier distribution system a request from the sender for location information about the mail item, the request including the unique sender generated identifier but not the unique carrier generated identifier; and
 - providing the location information to the sender in response to the request.
2. (Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the carrier applying the unique carrier generated identifier to the mail item.

Appln. No.: 09/927,963
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3. (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the unique sender generated identifier is in a bar code form.

5. (Original) The method as recited in claim 4, wherein the mail item has a recipient address printed thereon and the unique sender generated identifier is located on the mail item proximate the recipient address and further comprising using the unique sender generated identifier for locating the recipient address.

6. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the unique sender generated identifier includes an address and further comprising the carrier obtaining the address from the unique sender generated identifier and supplying to the address information about the location of the mail item.

7. (Original) The method as recited in claim 6, wherein the address is one of an e-mail address, a pager number, and a facsimile machine number.

8. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the unique sender generated identifier includes an electronic address and additional data that uniquely identifies the mail item.

9. (Original) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising uniquely associating the unique sender generated and unique carrier generated identifiers by storing them in a file.

10. (Original) The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising reading the unique carrier generated identifier at a plurality of locations throughout the carrier distribution system, storing in the file a date stamp, a time stamp, and a location identifier each

Appln. No.: 09/927,963
Amdt. Dated February 27, 2007
Reply to Office Action dated November 27, 2006

time the reading of the unique carrier generated identifier occurs, and associating in the file the date stamp, time stamp, and location identifier with the unique carrier generated identifier and the unique sender generated identifier.

11.(Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)